

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for assembling a blood treatment circuit by aseptically connecting a connected bag set, which has previously been sterilized, and a filter unit, which has previously been sterilized, to each other, said connected bag set being composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a plurality of secondary bags holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bags and a third tube to connect said secondary bags to one another, said filter unit having an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from a fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, and to which a bag is not connected, wherein said method comprises:

cutting either said first tube or said third tube so that either said first tube or said third tube comprises first and second cut ends;

cutting said second tube so that the second tube comprises first and second cut ends;

~~cutting said third tube so that the third tube comprises first and second cut ends;~~

aseptically connecting said first cut end of said first tube or said third tube to said first cut end of said second tube, and aseptically connecting said second cut end of said first tube or said third tube to said second cut end of said second tube, thereby placing said filter unit along said first tube or said third tube.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for assembling a blood treatment circuit, said method comprising:

sterilizing a connected bag set which is composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a plurality of secondary bags holding blood or blood components, a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bags, and a third tube that connects said secondary bags to one another;

sterilizing a filter unit having an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from a fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, and to which a bag is not connected; and

cutting either said first tube or said third tube so that either said first tube or said third tube comprises first and second cut ends;

cutting said second tube so that the second tube comprises first and second cut ends;

~~cutting said third tube so that the third tube comprises first and second cut ends;~~

aseptically connecting said first cut end of said first tube or said third tube to said first cut end of said second tube, and aseptically connecting said second cut end of said first tube or said third tube to said second cut end of said second tube, thereby placing said filter unit along said first tube or said third tube.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 3, wherein said second tube and/or said third tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection.

8. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 4, wherein said second tube and/or said third tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection.

9. (Currently Amended) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim [[5]] 7, wherein said mark indicates the direction of flow of fluid in the tube.

10. (Currently Amended) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim [[1]] 3, wherein said first and second tubes each have a mark indicating that the first and second tubes have been correctly connected to each other.

11. (Previously Presented) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 10, wherein said marks on the first and second tubes are comprised of an expanded outside diameter of the first and second tubes.

12. (Currently Amended) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim [[1]] 3, wherein said connected bag set and said filter unit are sterilized in different manners or under different conditions.

13. (Original) The method for assembling a blood treatment circuit as defined in Claim 12, wherein said connected bag set is sterilized by moist heat sterilization and said filter unit is sterilized by gas sterilization or radiation sterilization.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The filter unit as defined in Claim [[14]] 20, wherein said second tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection to said first tube.

16. (Currently Amended) The filter unit as defined in Claim [[15]] 20, wherein said mark indicates the direction of flow of fluid in the second tube.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled).

20. (Currently Amended) A filter unit to be aseptically connected to a connected bag set in order to assemble a blood treatment circuit, said connected bag set having previously been sterilized and being composed of a primary bag holding collected blood and a plurality of secondary bags holding blood or blood components and a first tube to connect said primary bag to said secondary bags and a third tube to connect said secondary bags to one another, said filter unit comprising an inlet and an outlet, a filter medium to remove specific components from fluid introduced through said inlet, and a second tube, both ends of which are connected to said inlet and said outlet, and to which a bag is not connected, wherein either said first tube or said third tube is aseptically connected to said second tube by using an apparatus for aseptically connecting tubes, and wherein said apparatus for aseptically connecting said first tube or said third tube [[and]] to said second tube cuts said first tube or said third tube, and said second tube [[tubes]] tube, and then aseptically connects one of said first tube and said third tube, [[and]] to said second tube to the other tube at their cut surfaces, such that one of said cut surfaces of said first tube or said third tube facing one direction is connected to one of said cut surfaces of said second tube facing an opposite direction, whereas the other of said cut surfaces of said first tube or said third tube facing said opposite direction is connected to the other of said cut surfaces of said second tube facing said one direction, thereby placing said filter unit along said first tube or said third tube.

Claims 21-25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The filter unit as defined in Claim 20, wherein said second tube has a mark that indicates the position of its connection to said third tube.

27. (Previously Presented) The filter unit as defined in Claim 26, wherein said mark indicates the direction of flow of fluid in the second tube.

28. (Previously Presented) The filter unit as defined in Claim 20, wherein said second tube has a mark indicating that the second tube has been correctly connected to the third tube.

29. (Previously Presented) The filter unit as defined in Claim 28, wherein said mark is comprised of an expanded outside diameter of the second tube.

30. (Previously Presented) The filter unit as defined in Claim 20, said filter unit having a by-pass tube that goes around said filter medium.

Claims 31-33 (Cancelled)